

**MINUTES OF THE EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING**

TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2008

Hanaford School Cafeteria

200 Middle Road

East Greenwich, RI 02818

**ANY ITEMS CONSIDERED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MAY BE
SUBJECT TO A**

VOTE

7:00p.m.

Call to Order

The second May School Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. in the Hanaford School Cafeteria. Members present were: Sue Cienki, Chair, Skip Day, Vice-chair, Merrill Friedemann, JeanAnn Guliano, and Susan Records as well as Superintendent Charles Meyers, Director of Administration, Maryanne Crawford, and Assistant Superintendent Helen O'Hara. Mrs. Winters arrived at 7:40p.m. and Mrs. Palumbo was absent. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. Public Comments

Dr. Tom O'Toole, 200 Moosehorn Road, spoke about the Social Disorder Program at Meadowbrook. He thanked Mr. Meyers and the School Committee for their commitment to kids. He noted that moving this program from Meadowbrook to Frenchtown disrupts the team, teachers and paraprofessionals since building integrated teams

doesn't happen overnight. He added that changes can be traumatic since it would be an unfamiliar environment. Dr. O'Toole also stated that staff development among classroom teachers and paraprofessionals is critical. He asked why we would break up a program that works extremely well.

Patricia Rakovic, Speech and Language Pathologist, stated the children in this program are very sensitive, and over ten years of research has gone into this program.

Joanne Quinn, an East Greenwich resident feels that this program can't be replicated by moving teachers and students to another building, and it would be detrimental to their learning.

Pamela Mateer, grade 1 teacher at Meadowbrook and East Greenwich resident, feels very emotional about this issue. She asked the school Committee to reconsider since these students have become a part of Meadowbrook. She added that although she has not had formal training with these students, she has learned by watching the unique ways of Lore Gray, the teacher in this program, and her staff. She asked the School Committee to think creatively.

Laurie Ratigan, grade 1 teacher at Meadowbrook and an East Greenwich resident stated that the main policy of the East Greenwich School District is Kids First. She feels this population can't handle a move.

Lore Gray, the teacher of the social communications classroom at Meadowbrook, feels that the concerns are much higher than she expressed in her letter to the Committee. She feels it's about students who have serious issues.

Mr. Levine asked the Committee to figure out a way to keep the program together no matter where it is.

3. Recognitions

3.1.1 RETIREMENTS: The following teachers were recognized for their service to the East Greenwich Public Schools: Evangeline McDonald-Meadowbrook, Patricia

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Hincks-Hanaford, Nancy Carty-Frenchtown, Frank Cybulski-Cole Middle, Kathleen Dunstan-Cole Middle, Joyce Tomecko-Cole Middle, Richard Brenner-High School and Cole Middle, Erin Rath-High School, Helen O'Hara-Assistant Superintendent, and Maryann Andries-CWC

3.1.2 Vincent Varrecchione, Athletic Director, was recognized for successfully completing the process to claim the title of "Certified Athletic Administrator" by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

3.2 Appointment

3.2.1 On a motion made by Mrs. Guliano and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Christine Uhrin, Principal at Hanaford School, for the 2008-2009 school year, effective July 1, 2008. Mr. Meyers stated that it is a pleasure to recommend her. He added that three years ago, Ms. Uhrin did an outstanding job as principal of Eldredge School.

3.2.2 On a motion made by Mrs. Guliano and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the appointment of

Cheryl Gilkenson, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Special Education.

4. Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Mr. Day and seconded by Mrs. Guliano, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of the May 6 Regular Session and Building Committee Meeting. Mrs. Friedemann objected because the April 22 minutes were approved without correction, and then some Committee members wanted to change the vote. She feels the minutes don't reconcile.

5. Second Reading and Vote on Recycling Policy

Mrs. Guliano made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Records to approve the Recycling Policy. The items which can be recycled will be posted. Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Guliano to amend the motion to include "Appropriate recycling receptacles are required in all school facilities and fields." The motion passed unanimously.

6. High School Trip to Spain

Ms. Randi Volpe, Spanish Teacher at Cole Middle School, has been working with her department head and will be scheduling a parent meeting. It was noted that a ratio of 6 to 1 is needed for chaperones. Mrs. Crawford stated that we have a document on file naming the school department as a third party. Mrs. Friedemann made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to approve the trip as long as all insurance provisions are followed. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Winters to approve the out-of-state field trip to the Boston Museum of Science

on May 21, 2008 for Eldredge School students. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Records to approve the out-of-state field trip to Lake Compounce in CT for the purple team at Cole Middle School on June 13, 2008. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Recall of Teachers: Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section 7-5
Mr. Day made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Guliano to recall the twenty teachers who were laid off. He noted that these are all positions we need to operate under the proposed budget. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Approval to Proceed with RFQ for Project Manager for Fields Project

Mr. Meyers stated the need for this person. He noted that Caito Corporation and the Gifford Design Group are in the engineering stage, and we would like them to produce the project within our budget. Mr. Meyers stated that this person could be

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paid with the impact fees or when the Town feels it will float the bond for the fields project. He also noted that the impact fee fund could be paid back once the bond is floated, and there is no obligation from the School Committee to spend money at this time. Mrs. Guliano made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Day to proceed with an RFQ for a Project Manager for the Fields Project. Mrs. Friedemann wants to use the current staffing we have, since there is no money. She feels we shouldn't go out and spend any money. Mr. Meyers

understood her point but stated that no one in the school department is qualified to do this. He added that someone such as Ernie DiSaia could actually save us money. Mr. Meyers stated that for this project, a portion is set aside for the project manager in the budget. Mrs. Friedemann doesn't want to see an expensive consultant come out of our budget. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Discussion of Adjustments to FY 2009 Budget

Mrs. Cienki noted that our budget was reduced by \$534,000 by the town. Mrs. Friedemann stated that she has suggestions on where we can find the money which include individuals employed by the district, but they can't be discussed in open session. Mr. Meyers stated that the reductions mean we will relinquish grounds maintenance and snow plowing to the town. Mr. Day feels we may have a problem if our maintenance staff reports to the Highway Department. Mr. Meyers will set up a meeting with the town for June 9 on this issue. Mrs. Guliano stated that we can't give away our responsibilities since it affects how our children will survive.

12. Administrators' Salaries for 2007-2008

Mr. Meyers stated that he will meet individually with administrators to determine their salary. Mrs. Friedemann wondered about a bump up in salaries years ago and Mr. Meyers stated that it was because of new duties. Mrs. Friedemann feels the School Committee will be relinquishing their responsibilities if they allow the Superintendent to make this decision. On the motion made by Mrs. Guliano and seconded by Mrs. Records, the Committee voted to authorize the Superintendent to meet individually with each principal to offer them

a 15% co-share (from May 20, 2008 forward), a \$125 reduction in the buy-back and a salary not to exceed the base of 2.5%. Mr. Day and Mrs. Friedemann voted no.

13. School Committee Concerns

Mr. Day had a concern that the two page letter from the Building Inspector has issues to be addressed with the schools. He stated it is an embarrassment. Mr. Meyers stated that all issues have been addressed and we will have a re-inspection.

Mrs. Friedemann asked if the corrections have been made to the February 28 Executive Session.

Mrs. Guliano mentioned that there will be a meeting concerning the Autism Program on May 22, 2008 at Meadowbrook Farms School. Mr. Meyers stated that he wasn't notified of the meeting.

14. On a motion made by Mr. Day and seconded by Mrs. Guliano, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn and go into Executive Session at 8:35p.m. under R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (2) for an Update on the Secretary and Paraprofessional Contract Negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Giuliani
Secretary